

United States Senate  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

November 26, 2002

The Honorable Donald H. Rumsfeld  
Secretary of Defense  
1000 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20301-1000

Dear Secretary Rumsfeld:

For the last three weeks, I have repeatedly asked the Defense Department to brief me on the Administration's intentions to deal with Iraq's oil supplies if military conflict occurs in that nation. As a member of the Senate Intelligence and Energy Committees, I have asked your staff for this briefing because I understand from others in the Executive Branch that the Department of Defense is taking the lead in planning on this question.

Due to the massive reserves of oil available in Iraq, and to this country's unfortunate dependence on foreign oil, I believe the disposition of Iraq's oil stores is an issue of enormous importance to the economic security of our country. I am determined that any program instituted by this Administration must not simply serve as a boon to powerful energy interests at home or abroad.

There is no question that Saddam Hussein has engaged in heinous and reprehensible actions. A new Iraqi government should have the freedom to make choices in the best economic interests of the Iraqi nation and its people. Mr. Secretary, it is Iraq's oil and not ours.

I believe, however, that in the near term the United States will have to play an active role in addressing the use of that oil. The decisions made with respect to that oil are crucial to the stability of oil markets in the United States and around the world.

I hope that your personal intervention will make it possible for me to receive a briefing promptly.

Sincerely,



RON WYDEN  
U.S. Senator